

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 18, 2004. Claims 1 to 18 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 7 and 13 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 3, 5 to 9, 11 to 15, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,928,252 (Gabbe), and Claims 4, 10 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Gabbe and U.S. Patent No. 5,963,216 (Chiarabini). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns controlling a plurality of print jobs. In one mode of operation, a user is allowed to select a combine method from a plurality of combine methods. The combine methods control combining the plurality of print jobs when a common layout is desired for the print jobs. In one of the combine methods, a last page of a leading print job and a first page of a trailing print job are successively laid out without a gap. In another combine method, the first page of the trailing print job is laid on the surface next to a surface on which the last page of the leading print job is laid out. In yet another combine method, the first page of the trailing print job is laid on the sheet next to a sheet on which the last page of the leading print job is laid out.

According to this feature of the invention, a common layout is utilized for performing each of the print jobs and the user can select one method from different combine methods when double-sided printing is designated. Previews of the printouts resulting from the different combine methods are shown in FIG. 28 to FIG. 30, for example. As shown in the figures, "gap" means a space in which a page(s) can be laid out as the preview images shown in

Figs. 28 and 29. Therefore, "without a gap" means there is neither a line space nor a margin between printed pages.

Turning now to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a print control method of combining stored print jobs. The method includes a layout instructing step of allowing a user to instruct plural print jobs to use a common layout when the plural print jobs are combined, a combine method designating step of allowing a user to designate a combine method from a plurality of combine methods for indicating how to lay out each page of the plural print jobs to be combined on plural sheets when it is instructed in the layout instructing step that the common layout is used by the plural print jobs and double-sided printing is designated, and a layout step of successively laying out a last page of a leading job and a first page of a trailing job without a gap when a first method is designated as the combine method, laying out the first page of the trailing job on a surface next to a surface on which the last page of the leading job is laid out when a second method is designated as the combine method, and laying out the first page of the trailing job on a sheet next to a sheet on which the last page of the leading job is laid out when a third method is designated as the combine method.

In contrast, Gabbe discloses a printing apparatus that prints multiple pages written in page description format on a single sheet. The printing apparatus dynamically fits the pages into a usable area of the sheet. The apparatus first determines a maximum scale factor to cover the usable area of the sheet by the multiple pages. The multiple pages are then laid out on a sheet and printed, as shown in FIG. 7A to FIG. 7P.

However, Gabbe fails to disclose instructing plural print jobs to use a common layout. As Gabbe does not address plural print jobs, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Gabbe of how plural print jobs should be combined when double-sided printing is selected.

Therefore, Gabbe fails to disclose or suggest allowing a user to designate a combine method from a plurality of combine methods indicating how to lay out each page of the plural print jobs on plural sheets when a common layout is used and double-sided printing is designated.

Chiarabini discloses a computer system for generating a print preview of a print job. However, Chiarabini suffers from the same defect as does Gabbe, as Chiarabini does not address how multiple print jobs are to be combined. Specifically, Chiarabini fails to disclose or suggest allowing a user to designate a combine method from a plurality of combine methods indicating how to lay out each page of the plural print jobs on plural sheets when a common layout is used and double-sided printing is designated.

In light of the foregoing described deficiencies of the cited references, Applicants submit that amended independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

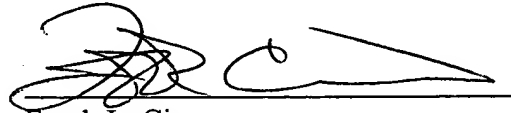
Amended independent Claims 7 and 13 are directed to an apparatus and a computer readable storage medium, respectively, useful in implementing the method of amended independent Claim 1. As such, Applicants submit that amended independent Claims 7 and 13 are also in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', written over a horizontal line.

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